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CLINTON, TENNESSEE, A TENTATIVE DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE SCHOOL DESEGREGATION CRISIS. FIELD REPORTS ON DESEGREGATION IN THE SOUTH, FR. 2.

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THIS FIELD REPORT ANALYZES THE CONFLICT WHICH DEVELOPED IN A SMALL TENNESSEE TOWN IN 1956 OVER EFFORTS TO DESEGREGATE THE SCHOOLS. ALONG WITH BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE COMMUNITY, THE REPORT CONTAINS (1) A CHRONOLOGY OF THE EVENTS, (2) A DISCUSSION OF THE OPINIONS AND ATTITUDES OF THE COMMUNITY ABOUT RACE RELATIONS, DESEGREGATION, AND VIOLENCE AND MOB RULE, (3) A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLE OF THE PRESS, CIVIC OFFICIALS, LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS IN THE DESEGREGATION CRISIS, AND (4) A REVIEW OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SMALL NEGRO COMMUNITY AND ITS ACTIONS IN THE DESEGREGATION ATTEMPTS. THIS DOCUMENT IS ALSO AVAILABLE FOR 25 CENTS FROM THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE OF B'NAI B'RITH, 315 LEXINGTON AVE., NEW YORK, NEW YORK. (NH)

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FIELD REPORTS ON DESEGREGATION IN THE SOUTH

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CLINTON, TENNESSEE:

A Tentative Description and Analysis of the School Desegregation Crisis

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CLINTON, TENNESSEE: A Tentative Description and Analysis of the School Desegregation Crisis

Community Background

Clinton is a small town (3,712—1950 census) in the Cumberland Mountains of East Tennessee, located fifteen miles northwest of Knoxville. As county seat of Anderson County and largest town in the area for many years, Clinton has served as a governmental, shopping and service center for the entire region, and has been particularly close to developments in the eastern part of the county.

Clinton and the surrounding rural communities in the eastern section of Anderson County are more prosperous and not as "rough" as the coal mining districts in the northern and western parts of the county. Average (median) family income in Clinton was $2,833 a year in 1949, $850 above the average for the state of Tennessee. Clinton is clean, well-kept and club-minded, and civic pride runs high in the descendants of its older families.

In addition to its shops and service establishments, Clinton is the home of Magnet Mills, a hosiery plant employing some one thousand workers. Magnet Mills is the only sizeable industry in Clinton—there is another small plant employing fifty to seventy-five workers that cans dog food—and was the only large-scale manufacturing enterprise in the county before 1945. Magnet Mills draws employees from the rural areas of Anderson County and four other contiguous counties, Knox, Campbell, Union and Roane.

The high school in Clinton, one of three in the county (Norris and Lake City also have high schools), serves the eastern part of Anderson County, with about fifty per cent of its population coming from outside the city limits of Clinton. It is directly under the operation of the Anderson County Board of Education, though there is a city board of education that governs the elementary schools in Clinton.

People in Clinton think of their community as "quiet" and "substantial" and will invariably tell you there was never any "trouble" in its history before the school desegregation crisis. As a matter of fact, Clinton has experienced two other disturbances involving mob action in the past fifteen years. Both of these occurred in connection with labor disputes, one in September, 1941, when the CIO-affiliated American Federation of Hosiery Workers local, which mill management refused to recognize as a bargaining agent, went out on strike, and the other in the spring of 1955, when workers in the manually operated Clinton Bell Telephone exchange joined in the southwide CIO Communications Workers of America strike. [In 1941, the state Highway Patrol came in very quickly to quiet violence on the picket line between striking and non-striking workers (both the local police and Highway Patrol aiding management in weakening the strike by treatment of strikers, according to newspaper accounts.) In 1955, a mob of strikers and sympathizers, angered by the use of out-of-town workers to keep the exchange going, attempted to break into the exchange and marched on the Mayor's house, threatening to dynamite it. Local police and county deputies, apparently reluctant to intervene with the mob as it built up, finally cracked down when the phone company

secured a four-county injunction reducing the number of pickets and considerably limiting their activities.]

Clinton and the school desegregation crisis are understood only when Clinton is viewed in its relationship to the rest of Anderson County. Both Clinton and the county as a whole grew slowly until 1933, with population enlargement coming from natural increase and migrations from the surrounding area. Their economic life was based primarily on the county's natural resources of lumber and coal, supplemented by production of hosiery at Magnet Mills. After 1933, two federal developments in the eastern part of the county made fundamental changes in both the population base and the county's economic life.

In 1933, construction on Norris, first of the Tennessee Valley Authority dams, began at the junction of the Clinch and Powell Rivers, nine miles north of Clinton. Construction, which lasted until 1936, and the various TVA projects centered at Norris, brought a large number of new people into the county. Most of the construction workers left, but some stayed, settling in the rural areas of the county; some professional workers stayed on in Clinton, and about two thousand people, directly connected with the dam, remained in the government-built town of Norris, seven miles north of Clinton.

In 1942 work on the Oak Ridge atomic energy center, six miles southwest of Clinton, began. This development brought thousands upon thousands of workers into the county, and during the period of construction, population turnover was heavy. The city of Oak Ridge, built and controlled by the Federal government, reached a peak population of 75,000 during 1945. After construction was completed and production of atomic materials began, many of the people who had come to build Oak Ridge—the bulk of them from other parts of Tennessee and the nearby states of Alabama and Mississippi, but some from all forty-eight states—stayed on to work at Oak Ridge. Oak Ridge's population leveled off to about 30,000, giving Anderson County a total population of 59,407 in 1950. Some Oak Ridge workers settled in the rural parts of the county surrounding Oak Ridge and Clinton and some have settled in Clinton. Clinton and other Anderson County people involved in the construction of Oak Ridge also got jobs in the plants as production began.

Four changes in Anderson County brought about by Oak Ridge and to some extent by Norris are important to the school desegregation situation in Clinton: (1) the increase in the Negro population (from 484 in 1940 to 1,813 in 1950), important not for its size, but for the fact that Negroes were moving into the county for the first time in recent history; (2) an increase in people from the "deep South" who take a much more inflammatory position on the "race question"; (3) the introduction of a small minority of non-Southerners who accept and favor desegregation; and (4) the "creeping integration" situation at Oak Ridge, which began with the employment of a few Negroes as professional and scientific workers, and was followed by the election of Negroes to the city council, desegregation of the junior and senior high schools (operated by Anderson County) and desegregation of the swimming pool in the summer of 1956.

Clinton has the largest Negro population in the county, excluding Oak Ridge. The 220 non-whites in Clinton live, for the most part, concentrated in one section. A few Negro families live mixed in with lower income whites in one other part of town. There are at least two Negro churches and an elementary school operated by the city in the Negro community.

Most of the Negro men and some of the Negro women in Clinton work at Oak

Ridge in unskilled capacities—as maids, janitors, service workers and in construction work. The few men who work in the town of Clinton also hold jobs as service workers, and the women work as domestics in Clinton homes.

Clinton's Negro high school students have always attended schools outside the county, first commuting by bus to LaFollette, twenty-four miles north, and then to Knoxville, fifteen miles away. Negro students in the western part of the county have travelled to Rockwood in Roane County. The county has never furnished high school facilities within the county for Negroes, though in 1950 the Atomic Energy Commission, plus a group of volunteer teachers from the Oak Ridge community began operating a separate high school for Negroes in Oak Ridge.

Chronology of School Desegregation

The Orderly Phase, 1940-August 23, 1956

1940-1949: Negro parents, particularly the McSwains, attempt to "equalize" separate facilities for Negro high school students through pressure on county school board. Parents demand and get assistance from county to send their children to accredited schools outside county. Negro students ultimately enrolled in Austin High School in Knoxville.

September, 1950: Several Negro high school students attempt to enroll in Clinton High School. County Board of Education refuses enrollment, makes usual arrangements for Negro students to attend Austin High in Knoxville.

December, 1950: Five Negro high school students, with the backing of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, file suit against the Anderson County School Board. Plaintiffs claim the out-of-county arrangements do not meet the county's obligation to furnish equal facilities.

April, 1952: District Court rules the out-of-county arrangements meet the county's obligation to furnish equal facilities.

1952-1954: Clinton's case, appealed to the U. S. Sixth Circuit Court in Cincinnati, is held in abeyance, pending the U. S. Supreme Court's action in the five school segregation cases jointly under consideration.

June 30, 1954: Sixth Circuit Court reverses the District Court's decision and sends the case back to the District Court with instructions "for further proceedings upon the authority and in accordance with the decision of the [U. S.] Supreme Court. . . ."

July 29, 1954: District Judge Taylor announces the final decree in the Anderson County case will await the U. S. Supreme Court's forthcoming decree on implementation of the five cases ruled on May 17, 1954.

August, 1955: Plaintiffs in the Anderson County school case ask the District Court for a final judgment requiring complete and immediate desegregation in all schools in the county. County officials ask for a decree limiting desegregation to the high schools and giving the county time to accomplish desegregation. County Board appoints a committee to study and make plans for desegregation.

September 16, 1955: Judge Taylor rules "no final decree is presently in order" and instructs County School Board to proceed "with reasonable expedition" to comply with the order to desegregate.

October, 1955: County School Board adopts a resolution affirming its policy of obeying court orders. Members of the school board and the Integration Committee, made up of PTA and school principals, began meeting with PTAs over the county to tell them of coming desegregation and get their reactions.

December 6, 1955: Plaintiffs ask for a specific deadline for desegregation at hearings before Judge Taylor. County School Board asks for time to prepare for desegregation and that desegregation be limited to Clinton High School.

January 4, 1956: District Judge Taylor orders desegregation of all three high schools in Anderson County at a date no later than fall, 1956.

Spring, 1956: Principal D. J. Brittain of Clinton High School intensifies program of preparation of faculty and students.

May, 1956: Twelve Negro students eligible to attend Clinton High School in the fall of 1956 are preregistered. Full details of their registration reported in the *Clinton Courier-News.*

August 9, 1956: "All the facts" related to school desegregation in Clinton repeated in the *Clinton Courier-News,* including details about students, school policy on athletics and social events and Judge Taylor's January order.

August 20, 1956: Approximately seven hundred students, including twelve Negro students attend Clinton High for final registration. School dismissed for a week of in-service training for teachers. Petition protesting desegregation circulated by the Anderson County Federation for Constitutional Government.

August 22, 1956: Tennessee Federation for Constitutional Government files an injunction suit demanding that the state cut off funds to Clinton High School and restrain Anderson County officials from desegregating the school. Five of the fifteen Anderson County residents listed as complainants say they signed the Federation's petition, not understanding their names would be used in the suit; four institute legal action to have their names removed.

August 23, 1956: Tennessee Federation for Constitutional Government publishes ad in *Clinton Courier-News* inviting people of the county who do not "want mixed schools" to join them in working toward "an orderly solution to this problem."

Community Crisis, August 25-September 11, 1956

Saturday, August 25:* Frederick John Kasper, 26 year old executive secretary of the Seaboard White Citizens Council, arrives in Clinton and begins gathering support for a picket line protesting school desegregation the following Monday. Kasper gets in touch with the Anderson County Federation for Constitutional Government, gets a working list from them, makes additional contacts in house-to-house visits, distributes inflammatory literature.

Sunday, August 26, 1:30 p.m.: Meeting of Mayor, Police Commissioner, County Sheriff, acting Police Chief and local highway patrol officer to plan for police protection of school on Monday. Editor of *Clinton Courier-News* also present. Kasper talks to a crowd of 25 on courthouse steps.

3:00 p.m.: Meeting of *Courier-News* editor, Mayor, Police Commissioner and patrol officer, who has children in school, with Kasper and followers to try to persuade him to leave town, since they have already tried to prevent desegregation in the courts. County Sheriff and state Assistant Attorney General interrupt meeting to warn Kasper he will be arrested if he goes through with his plans.

4:00 p.m.: Kasper arrested by Sheriff on charges of inciting to riot and vagrancy, put in jail to await trial Tuesday morning.

Monday, August 27: Twelve Negro and 715 white students begin attending classes together at Clinton High School. The day proceeds without major incident though there are a few flare-ups outside the school. A handful of pickets carry anti-desegregation signs outside the school and a crowd of from 25 to 30 teen-agers and 25 to 30 adults gather outside the school. The crowd is orderly in the morning. During the afternoon an elderly woman and a Negro girl enrolled at Clinton are attacked by members of the protesting crowd. No arrests made, though a city policeman took a knife from a Negro student fighting with a white student.

Tuesday, August 28, 9:00 a.m.: Kasper tried and released on the grounds of insufficient evidence. Picketing at school continues, crowd a little larger. School attendance 803.

Noon: Kasper meets with students and adults outside school, sends for Principal Brittain, demands that he kick the Negro students out or resign. Brittain, talking with the 25 to 30 adults in the crowd, explains he is acting under court order, wants their children in school, will resign any time 51% of the parents and students don't want him. Kasper leaves, attempts to organize a parade to greet and talk to people.

Police more active on the school grounds, no incidents reported. Ruling on Tennessee Federation case denies injunction stopping desegregation.

7:30 p.m.: Kasper speaks to a crowd of 200-600 on courthouse square, says local authorities have no guts, people are a higher court than the Supreme Court, he will intensify pickets and fight "however long it takes."

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*All dates hereafter in 1956.

Wednesday, August 29, Morning: A heckling crowd of about 125 (50 stay-away students and teen-agers, 75 adults) demonstrates as some 750 students, including the twelve Negro students, enter school. Kasper arrives and begins organizing protest signs and cars for parades through town. Crowd, which increases as day wears on, ordered off school ground by police, but gather across from school. Inside the school, students vote 614 to 0 to keep Brittain principal.

Noon: A mob of 50-75 people chase Negro students through town. One student is attacked by a teen-age member of mob. Several other Negroes chased during the noon hour and later in the day. Police arrest several persons involved in attacks, put one Negro in jail for protective custody. Crowd begins to form outside jail. County Sheriff slips Negro students out back door of school to protect them from the mob. Clinton residents go to Judge Taylor in Knoxville, file a petition for an injunction restraining Kasper's and others' activities interfering with school desegregation.

7:30 p.m.: Kasper speaks to crowd of 800 in square. His speech is interrupted as Federal marshalls serve papers temporarily restraining his activities and notifying him of a hearing the next day at 1:00 p.m. regarding a permanent injunction. Kasper tells people to go ahead with their work.

Thursday, August 30, Morning: Picketing continues outside the school and the crowd swells to 300-400. Kasper stays away from immediate vicinity of the school but stations himself down the street. Inside, where 600 students are attending classes, Brittain announces a 447 to 6 vote of confidence from parents on the basis of unsigned ballots brought in by students. School dismissed at noon for a routine teachers meeting.

1:00 p.m.: Clinton residents present testimony in support of an injunction forbidding interference with desegregation; Kasper testifies he has not advocated violence or mob rule, is only using constitutional rights of free speech and freedom of assembly. Hearing not completed, Kasper held in jail pending bond.

Afternoon: Crowds outside school getting out of hand again, several arrests made in connection with throwing tomatoes at Negroes and at the jail. One picket arrested for violating restraining order.

7:30 p.m.: With Kasper in jail, twenty impromptu speakers take over at courthouse square, speaking against desegregation. mongrelization, and local, state, and national leaders who advocate mixing of the races.

Friday, August 31, Morning: Attendance at school drops sharply, mostly through fear of violence; only 446 students, including ten Negro students, report. A crowd, primarily students, watches arrival of cars bringing Negro students. Kasper's hearings continue in Knoxville, and Judge Taylor finds him guilty of contempt and sentences him to one year in prison.

7:30 p.m.: Two local speakers take over on square until Asa (Ace) Carter, Birmingham White Citizens Council leader, arrives to substitute for Kasper. Addressing crowd of 1,000, Carter attacks the Supreme Court, the NAACP and the "carpet bagging judge" who put Kasper in jail. He urges citizens to join the White Citizens Council and leaves while local segregationists are signing up members. The courthouse square crowd, fired by Carter's address, begins attacking cars of Negro tourists passing through. They march through streets shouting, "We want Kasper." Part of the mob breaks loose, marches to Mayor's house and threatens to dynamite it. Police make no arrests. Demonstrating continues late into the night. At midnight, the newly elected sheriff and his new deputies take office. Mayor Lewallen again attempts to get in touch with state authorities concerning outside help. He is unable to reach Governor.

Saturday, September 1, Morning: Board of Aldermen meets to declare Clinton in a state of emergency and issues a formal request to the Governor and citizens to assist in restoring law and order. Auxiliary police force organized to handle crowds in case state aid does not materialize. No crowds around school.

Afternoon: Auxiliary police (35) meet for training session. Segregation rally begins on courthouse square at 4:00 p.m. with speech from W. B. Rand of Shelby County, Ark. Only two dozen present.

Night: Crowd begins gathering on square at 6:15 p.m. Auxiliary police, headed by Leo Grant of Oak Ridge, keeps people moving. Just before 8:00 p.m., report reaches auxiliary police that crowd will storm courthouse to have scheduled meeting inside. Auxiliary police and crowd line up facing each other, police repelling crowd with tear gas. As crowd begins to re-form, state Highway Patrol arrives. Scheduled rally is permitted by Highway Patrol and an estimated 2,000 persons jam square to hear pro-segregation speeches from representatives of three Tennessee organizations. Crowd orderly. Three arrests made before Patrol arrived.

Sunday, September 2, Noon: Six hundred National Guardsmen arrive in Clinton and assemble for briefing and immediate duty. Guardsmen walk posts and patrol during afternoon.

Afternoon: Photographers and newsmen attempting to cover pro-segregation meeting at Blowing Springs community near Clinton are chased away with rocks and threats. Labor Day weekend travelers and curiosity seekers jam traffic on Highway 25-W through Clinton all during day, and detours are finally set up.

Night: Crowd begins forming on square, reaches a total strength of 3,000. Guardsmen absent from square during first part of evening but arrive later. At 8:00 p.m. Guardsmen rescue Negro sailor who becomes target of mob as he gets off bus on square. Later, members of crowd hurl firecrackers and torpedoes at passing cars, threaten to "get" Negroes. One man, identified as coming from a nearby county, speaks against integration several times. A cross is burned on the school grounds. Teen-agers, who compose large part of mob, hang around downtown until 1:00 a.m., though the crowd decreases in size as Guardsmen take action to control them.

Monday, September 3: Activity in Clinton declines as National Guard Commander Henry bans congregations on square, use of public address systems, outdoor speaking, parking on the square and individuals remaining on the courthouse lawn after 6:00 p.m. Tourists and curiosity seekers continue to descend on Clinton and Guardsmen detour all except those having business in town. Some 30,000 cars turned away from Clinton Monday (Labor Day) and at one point cars attempting to enter Clinton line up for 2½ miles on the highway. Guardsmen stationed in square at 6:00 p.m. break up group of about 50 gathering in the downtown area. Clinton is otherwise quiet and orderly, but mob of 250 at Oliver Springs (20 miles away), acting on rumors that schools will desegregate Tuesday, attack Negro cars; five blasts of dynamite set off in the Negro community. Mob fired on by frightened Negroes in one car who are later searched for by armed mob of 600. Guardsmen break up search; arrest 15 who refuse to go home. Photographers on scene attacked by mob.

Tuesday, September 4: Attendance drops to 266, including nine Negro students, apparently as result of intensive telephone campaign over Labor Day weekend. Only small clusters of students and townspeople catcall as Negroes enter school. Hearings on Kasper's bond and permanent injunction postponed.

Afternoon and night: Negro students leave school peacefully, with only a small group of students and reporters on sidewalk after school dismissed. Roadblocks and Guard patrols continue, and about 8:00 p.m., Guardsmen break up a group of white teen-agers surrounding a Negro adult and three children in the downtown area.

Wednesday, September 5: School attendance increases to 324 and all Negro students are back in school. Brittain announces results of a survey that indicates 83 children are absent because of desegregation, 58 because of fear of violence, 27 for "normal" reasons. He says 12 have transferred. PTA executive committee issues statement urging parents to send their children back to school. More rural than town students are away from school. Friends of Oliver Springs prisoners attack newsmen as the men are released at 8:00 p.m.

Thursday, September 6: School attendance up to 394. Judge Taylor grants Kasper right to bail, and after further hearings, issues permanent injunction against interference with desegregation. National Guard has training session with auxiliary police. Guard forces in Clinton reduced.

Friday, September 7: School attendance climbs to 416 and Guard forces reduced again, leaving only 250 troopers in Clinton. Clinton's Board of Aldermen meets to pass restrictive measures to control city, including a curfew on all persons under 21 and a ban on outdoor assemblies of 10 or more persons. They announce that six additional, experienced policemen will be hired. Kasper released on bond when two Clinton residents put up their property to meet his bond.

Saturday, September 8: Clement lets some Guardsmen stay, refuses to leave patrol cars on loan. Sheriff Woodward declares a state of emergency, deputizes all former sheriffs and deputies and puts all police in county on stand-by. Sheriff also requests Marshals from the U. S. Department of Justice and deputizes 50 auxiliary police.

Sunday, September 9: National Guard forces in Clinton reduced to 50. Kasper and Asa Carter ask permission to hold rally in Clinton, are refused and move on to Oliver Springs, where they hold an orderly meeting of about 250 in the Roane County section of Oliver Springs.

Monday, September 10: School attendance reaches 529 and the names of 257 students are turned over to county officials for absenteeism. No crowds appear around the school and the square, where no-parking ban continues.

Tuesday, September 11: School attendance up to 590, and Brittain announces a total of 36 students have withdrawn from Clinton High School. National Guard withdraws, leaving police protection in

the hands of local law enforcement agencies. Sheriff Woodward says he has deputized a total of about 150 men in the county and Clinton can now handle "any situation" by itself.

Opinions and Attitudes in the Community

Negroes and Race Relations: Many of the native east Tennessee people in Clinton and the Clinton area will tell you they have "a high type of colored people" or "a pretty good bunch of niggers" living in their town. They think that race relations have always been good, saying, typically, "they haven't caused any problems" or "they've never caused any trouble." Whites mention the fact that Negroes confine themselves pretty generally to their own community, and some think this is the basis for the "good" race relations; others believe that Negroes and whites have gotten along so well because "the niggers know their place." One man, who lived next to a Negro family in Clinton before he moved to a farm outside town, stated: "The niggers h'ar know their place. If they didn't, they'd 'a run them out." Community leaders tell you the things white people do *for* Negroes and point to the annual exchange of choirs in churches on Race Relations Sunday as an example of the fine spirit of understanding and cooperation existing in their city.

What the "good" relations seem to amount to is absence of trouble and submissive acceptance on the part of Negroes of a social system that excludes them from everything except menial job opportunities in the community, occasional friendly exchanges on the streets, access to the downtown stores and the annual exchange of church choirs. There are not enough Negroes living in Clinton to support their own businesses and professional services, so that, traditionally, Negroes have not been in any position to sustain aggressive leadership. The concept of "Negro representation," which enters into the thinking of whites in parts of the South with large Negro populations, does not come into the picture in Clinton—there are too few Negroes. White people run and control everything and Negroes are present, but not involved to any extent in the community process. Many white people believe that Negroes want to stay to themselves and that any efforts to change this pattern come from "outside influence" —the "new" Negroes who have come in with Oak Ridge, the NAACP, the Communists.

People from Clinton and the eastern part of the county do not seem as hostile to Negroes as those from the northern and western coal-mining sections of the county. In the eastern part of the county, whites and the few Negroes have lived in the same area under a sort of gentleman's agreement that each goes his own way and both ignore each other. In the western part of the county, where there are even fewer Negroes, prejudice against Negroes is much stronger. There is one section in the western part of the county for example, the Devonia-New River section, where Negroes are not permitted to enter, even to work. Once about a year ago, a contractor working on the road brought in a crew of Negroes. He was told to get those "niggers" out of the area by nightfall and not to bring them back. After the disturbances over school desegregation took place in Clinton, a dedicated White Citizens Council member from the Clinton area decided to hold a rally in this section. The meeting was well advertised and conveniently located, but when the time to start the rally came, nobody showed up. The WCC worker was puzzled and told a local citizen he thought this would be the very place they would get active support. "Listen," the man told him, "we don't need you. There's not been a nigger spend the night in this part of the county in over thirty years and there's not going to ever be one to do it again. We know how to handle this."

Desegregation: Community leaders in Clinton tell you that nobody—or very few

people—want desegregation, but most people in the town want law and order and will accept desegregation under court order until such time as the law is changed. Several leaders stated that if a poll were made, it would show that at least 90% of the people would prefer segregation over integration, but it would also show that 98% would be in favor of obeying the law, if the law called for desegregation.

Interviewing in the white community indicated there is a general passive acceptance of desegregation by court order among middle and upper class people, and probably a lesser acceptance among lower class families. People say they would prefer segregation if they had the choice, but that now that they no longer have the choice, they will "go along" with the law. One man said, "People would much rather it hadn't come up, but since it did, there is nothing else to do." A mother with two children in Clinton High stated, "It is the law now and we might as well take it with good grace." One frequently hears, "There is nothing you can do about it." Clinton's experience with the mob has, of course, crystallized the "law and order" aspects of desegregation.

Clinton leadership knew they had lost the school case as soon as the May 17, 1954, decision came down, and while nobody pushed desegregation, when their own order was final, there was no attempt to resist or defy it on the part of business men, civic leaders and people of influence. When they said anything, they said, "It is the law." As facts about desegregation were published in the local press, there were no expressions of disturbance or wide-spread resistance. The editor of the newspaper, the principal of the school and members of the board did not even get so much as one telephone call or one visit from irate citizens before Kasper came to town. The only vocal resistance came at the PTA meetings held in the fall of 1955, when school officials discussed coming desegregation with parents. R. G. Crossno of Norris, now chairman of the school board, was active in efforts to educate PTA members and spoke at a number of meetings throughout the county. He said, first of all, that people were always "flabbergasted" when informed about the decision. Over 90% at nearly all of the meetings did not like the idea, probably 99%, but at the same time, at least 98% would say if it were a question of obeying the law, and there was no legal way out, they would "go along with it." There would be two or three at every meeting who said they would never accept integration, and, according to Crossno, these are the same people that became active when Kasper arrived. They are currently active in fighting desegregation.

Active resistance to desegregation seems to come from people in the lower income groups and from two geographic sources: the native mountaineers from sections very hostile to Negroes and the in-migrants from the deeper South who came to the area with Oak Ridge. No business men or civic leaders were seen at any of the pro-segregation rallies, nor have any given support to the organized resistance shaping up under WCC, KKK and other auspices. Several people noted there was not a college graduate in any of Kasper's crowds, though there are many college graduates in the community who do not favor desegregation and would like to prevent it, if it could be done through legal channels. Community leaders have placed a great deal of emphasis on the "outsiders" who came in and caused the disturbances. They mention the fact that they did not recognize more than a half dozen faces in the crowd scenes they observed from a distance, on TV, or in magazine pictures. There were, apparently, many people from the far reaches of the county, as well as outside the county, who flocked in, but there were also Clinton people that the community leaders would not know, unless they happened to work for them or to have gotten into some kind of trouble that brought them to the attention of the communiy. One woman in the Sourwood neighborhood,

for example, where low to middle income families live, said everyone in that section went down to the meetings on the square and that most of them were sympathic to Kasper. The present county sheriff, Glad Woodward, stated there were "plenty of inside people," from "Oak Ridge, Oliver Springs and right around here."

Two additional points should be made about community attitudes toward desegregation. One, people who were hostile to desegregation did not, in some cases at least, believe that the school would actually go through with it and therefore made no effort to fight it ahead of time. They simply did not believe it would happen in Anderson County. Two, there were many county people from outside Clinton who apparently had no knowledge of the court order, or if they had such knowledge, no understanding of the process by which court orders are arrived at and enforced. Since the advent of Kasper, school board members, Principal Brittain and local officials have been visited and button-holed everywhere they go by people who want to know why they desegregated the schools and why they didn't do something to stop it. Many think it was a personal decision on the part of the principal or the Mayor. Others, benefitting, no doubt, from Kasper's "education," believe that if the school and public officials had any "guts," they could stand up to the court decision without any punishment, or that, if they would quit, the new officials would not be responsible to the Federal court as they were not named in the suit. They are people with meager educational backgrounds and no involvement in community decisions, and some of them are surprised to learn that the Mayor and the city council do not operate the schools. They say that "the crowd" that runs Clinton does what it pleases about everything else and could "put the niggers out of the school if they wanted to."

There are a few people who favor desegregation and see it as a moral rather than a legal issue, but nobody says this publicly, including the ministers. One young professional said he had been waiting for someone to say that desegregation was right as well as legal and was very surprised that not one person had taken that stand. He said he had also been waiting for the ministers to refute some of the material being circulated using the Bible to support segregation, but that not one had opened his mouth. A woman, prominent in local civic work, sees integration as the "only Christian solution" and criticized the churches "for trying to be neutral on a moral issue." She stated, "Our churches have let us down. I don't mean just here, but all over the nation."

Violence and Mob Rule: Practically everyone professes to be in favor of law and order and opposed to violence and mob rule—the differences come in the interpretation of what violence and mob rule consist of. In the eyes of community leaders and those who did not participate in Kasper's and Carter's gatherings, some instances of violence were taking place down at the school and on the courthouse square, and the mob was taking over the town. Top leadership saw Kasper as a "dangerous man" and feared the ultimate consequences of a situation which local law enforcement agencies were not controlling. The disturbances at the school and the "nigger chasing" all week frightened them. Friday night's demonstrations convinced them that things were definitely getting out of hand and that something drastic must be done to "restore law and order." Average citizens who were not participating in the demonstrations were also afraid and welcomed the Highway Patrol and the National Guard for the quiet and the peace of mind they brought. One woman said during the demonstrations she was really afraid for the first time in her life and burst into tears when she heard the sirens heralding the Highway Patrol's entrance into town. She said she knew that some of the auxiliary policemen would be killed if help did not come. A restaurant operator

said it was "terrible" to have to have the National Guard come in, but that she guessed "someone would have gotten hurt" if they hadn't come in. Principal Brittain said he had hundreds of telephone calls from people who were afraid to send their children to school during the week of the mob demonstrations and that these calls subsided when the Guard arrived. Attendance went steadily upward after the Guard occupied Clinton.

As to the people who participated in the meetings and the demonstrations, many do not seem to see any mob action or violence in what they did. Kasper himself stated under oath that he had not advocated violence or mob rule and that he and the other people were only exercising their constitutional rights of free speech and freedom of assembly. He and his sympathizers in Clinton maintain that the Mayor and his "crowd" violated their rights and provoked the crowd into whatever was done. They resent the fact that newspapers, including the *Clinton Courier-News,* labelled them a "mob" and they say that the Mayor and his "crowd" got excited because things weren't going their way. They also say that the Mayor, the principal and others who participated in efforts to control the crowds are "publicity seekers" and "made fools of themselves" over the Negroes. W. H. Till, local head of the White Citizens Council and one of the organizers of the Anderson County Federation for Constitutional Government, attributes Friday night's demonstrations to "teen-agers who got out of hand" and says Saturday night's crowd action was a direct result of the Home Guard's police work and use of tear gas. One old mountaineer who participated in many of the crowd scenes said everything was all right until the auxiliary police threw the tear gas and that made people mad. He and others insist that the crowd would have been orderly if they had been permitted to have their talk at the time it was scheduled.

There is another factor involved in insistence that nothing disorderly was happening. When the interviewer pressed questions about attacks on Negroes during the week and the damage done to Negroes' cars, several members of one family who had been very much involved snickered, and one member, a high school girl who has transferred to Lake City to finish her senior year, replied, "That? Oh, it was just niggers." Their code apparently does not hold them responsible for the same standards in their treatment of whites and Negroes. The old mountaineer at the head of this family did admit that the tomato throwing on Thursday was wrong and that it wouldn't "do no good." One of his sons, photographed chasing a Negro student and yelling, said he was yelling at the police officer to take a knife away from the Negro student. The old man observed that "none of them white people they picked up had no fighting tools" while "all the niggers had knives." He offered this as evidence that the white people were not promoting violence.

Several white students who attended the mass meetings and were outside of school in the midst of the demonstrations were willing to call them "mobs" and stated "the mob could never get you anywhere." One boy arrested for fighting with a Negro student agreed with two fellow students that Kasper had gone about things in the wrong way. They said, "He should have had meetings in an auditorium or gotten up a petition, that the mob could not accomplish anything good."

The Press

There is one newspaper in Clinton, the *Clinton Courier-News.* It has a circulation of 3,500 and prints news from all over the county. The owner, Horace V. Wells is editor, and he and his wife both work on the paper and are very active in community affairs.

They came to Clinton to establish their paper in 1933 when Norris Dam was being built and have won several awards for the paper in competition with other county newspapers. Mr. Wells is a native of Columbia, S. C., but lived in Nashville from the age of twelve until he moved to Clinton. He is a graduate of Vanderbilt University and worked on the Nashville *Tennessean* staff as state news editor. The Wells have a daughter in Clinton High School.

When the school suit first came up, Mr. Wells urged the county courts to carry on the legal fight against desegregation and appeared before the Board of Education to make the same plea there. Others said it was a waste of money, but he felt "no legal step should be left untried." Once the decision came down, however, he accepted it and urged others to do the same. In September of 1955, when the Anderson County Federation for Constitutional Government tried to stop desegregation at Oak Ridge, he sympathized editorially with the position of the County Board of Education but said to his readers, "No matter what you or the Board would like to do—it is now up to the Federal Court Judge." He continued: "We are sure the problem can be worked out if everyone is reasonable, but all of us must keep in mind that the ruling of the United States Supreme Court is the law of the land . . . and must be observed by all of us if our government is to stand." (September 29) The *Courier-News* gave good coverage to developments as desegregation approached, printing the story about Negro registration in May and rehearsing all the facts, including reprinting Judge Taylor's order on August 9, 1956. On August 30, in the midst of the mob demonstrations he deplored Kasper as a "born troublemaker" who "will only serve two purposes—to line his pockets with membership fees he will collect and turn this community upside down. . . ." He congratulated the police and the sheriff's deputies on their efforts to maintain law and order and reminded people, "This country of ours was founded upon the Constitution—and Kasper would have you throw away the Constitution."

Almost the entire September 6 issue of the *Courier-News* was devoted to reporting the school segregation crisis, and Wells again dealt with the problem editorially in his column. He stated:

> It is not a question of whether we favor segregation or oppose it. The Supreme Court has decided that question for us. . . .
>
> You have a right to believe in segregation and so do we. But neither you nor I have a right to violate the law, nor do we have a right to take the law into our own hands. We must stand together in Clinton, obey all laws (whether we like them or not) so long as they are laws, and see that others do the same thing.

Again, on September 13 and September 20, Editor Wells wrote on the school situation in Clinton, reminding people of the basic necessity of upholding law and order. In a news feature story entitled "Facts on How Integration Came to Clinton," September 6, and in his column, September 20, Wells went over the facts of the situation, attempting to clear up points of common confusion.

In addition to his work through the newspaper, editor Wells was very active in efforts to get Kasper removed from the scene and get the situation in the town under control. He was one of the group that met with Kasper when he first came to town and he went to Knoxville to testify on Kasper's activities when the injunction was being sought. Wells' news editor, James Loggan, also testified in Kasper's hearings though this put both of them in the "integrationist" camp and cut off Loggan's rapport with the resistant element in the community. Mrs. Wells, a member of the PTA executive committee. participated in the back-to-school movement spearheaded by the PTA.

Civic Officials

The Mayor, the City Recorder (secretary of the Board of Aldermen) and two members of the Board of Aldermen were interviewed. All four stated individually that most of the people in the community did not want desegregation, but that they were law-abiding people and would abide by the decision until the federal court changed it or some other legal means of avoiding desegregation were found. They indicated they personally fell into this group of people who opposed desegregation but would abide by the law. One Alderman expressed sympathy for those who were fighting it, but said it should be fought in an orderly way. He believed that desegregation could not work and that the Supreme Court would ultimately realize it, and eventually alter its decision. The Mayor and the City Recorder seemed to feel it would work out all right if Clinton were left alone, and the fourth Alderman said he didn't know what would happen.

The Mayor met with law enforcement officers of the community on Sunday, the day after Kasper came to town, and had "huddles" with other public officials throughout the week. The first official meeting of the Board of Aldermen was held Saturday, September 1, when the group unanimously approved an appeal to the Governor for help and requested citizens of the community to assist in maintaining law and order. They saw the disturbances as a matter of maintaining law and order and this was why, the Mayor said, the Board of Aldermen was 100% on sending for the Guard and commissioning the auxiliary police. When the National Guard came in, the Board began the process of adopting a number of regulations designed to control mob action: banning use of public address systems, outdoor meetings, congregations on the square, parking on the square, individuals remaining on the square after 6:00 p.m. They passed on these regulations for the first time on Monday, September 3, when General Henry issued them to the community as emergency measures, and completed adoption at a third reading the following Friday.

The Mayor stated in his interview: "I would enforce the law whether it was the school question or some other thing. I had no choice. If you let a mob get away with it one time, then there is no telling what will happen the next time, when it might be something that matters to you. That was the way Hitler worked, by using the mob to get power." He added he would have tried to enforce the law, but would not have taken as strong a stand as he did if he hadn't "felt the Governor was behind him." He thought before Kasper came in that the people were reconciled to desegregation and that they had done a good job of preparation. "Everybody seemed to understand what it was all about." Then when Kasper came, they "forgot everything else." He wanted to avoid calling in the State Patrol and the Guard if Clinton could handle the problem alone, but began making inquiries about the possibility of assistance on Sunday, August 26. He thinks that active resistance to desegregation will die down as the group gets tired of "getting nowhere with it."

City Judge Paul Horton (City Recorder) was active in organization of the auxiliary police and has been very insistent that people who violate the injunction against desegregation be reported to the Federal Court. He came by the Police Department one morning when the interviewer was talking to the Acting Chief to ask about a Citizens Council "parade" through town the night before. The Chief mentioned a white man going up on "nigger hill" later on in the evening to try to persuade the Negroes to take their children out of the school, and Horton immediately began asking

questions as to the identification of the man and whether his name had been turned over to the federal authorities. "That's violating the injunction," Horton stated right away. "His name should be turned in."

The Alderman who thought the Supreme Court would ultimately alter its decision stated: "Ninety-nine per cent of the people of Clinton are opposed to integration, but you can't find a business man or a person of any influence who is so much against it that he will violate the law to oppose it." He has noticed that Kasper has not "gone over" in Alabama and doesn't think he will be acceptable as a leader anywhere after his publicity in Clinton. "You can't have mob rule," he stated. "The mob is no good whether it is at a picnic or over a school issue. The mob isn't the way to get things. It only creates disorder and can't accomplish anything."

The fourth public official contacted was noncommittal about the situation, stating that as a businessman he has friends on both sides and cannot afford to say much. He did say, however, "There was nothing to do but enforce the law. The crowd was beginning to get out of hand and something had to be done." He saw the whole affair as a "mighty bad situation," and had no idea what would happen as far as school desegregation working out.

Law Enforcement Agencies

At the time Kasper came to Clinton, the Police Department consisted of six men. The Chief of Police was in the hospital (leaving five), and the department was headed by Joe Wilson, appointed Acting Chief until the regular Chief's recovery was complete. All the men in the department were elderly men, probably not one was under 60 and all were untrained. As one citizen of Clinton put it, "All they are good for is to put parking tickets on the cars and help school children across the street—which is all they are called upon to do under ordinary circumstances." The department is located on the next block from the courthouse square, between the courthouse and Clinton High School.

The county sheriff's office consisted of eight men, headed by Sheriff Joe Owen. Anderson County elected new officials during the first week in August and Sheriff Owen was defeated by Glad Woodward, a former Oak Ridge policeman. The Sheriff's office changed hands at midnight, August 31, the night the mob began rocking cars and attacking Negro tourists coming through town.

During the first week of the crisis, both the city police and the county sheriff's office added men to help take care of the law enforcement situation. The police department added three men, all former members of the fire department, on Tuesday, August 28. The sheriff increased his force by three on September 1, employing three former Knox County deputies who went out with the change in county officers in that county. The entire sheriff's force, in fact, changed at midnight of the 31st. On September 7, the Board of Alderman made provision to hire six additional, experienced policemen, and made the auxiliary police force (37 volunteers organized during the crisis), a permanent body. As the National Guard pulled out, Sheriff Woodward deputized all the former sheriff's deputies—and the auxiliary police, and put all police in the area (89) on stand-by, to be called in case of further disturbances.

As soon as the Mayor became aware that Kasper was in town, he called a meeting of law enforcement officers in the area, including the local state Highway Patrolman. Police were all put on active duty and stationed at the school, and the county sheriff agreed to supplement the police force if they could not handle the situation. The High-

way Patrol officer agreed to get in touch with his superiors about the possibility of further help, if the local officers could not handle the situation. No plans in the law enforcement area were made ahead of time, as civic officials had not felt it would be necessary.

Plans were made at once to deal with the possibility of disturbances outside the school, but as each day went by, local law enforcement officers were less and less able to cope with the situation, and the mob got increasingly larger and more active. None of the white leaders interviewed in Clinton criticized the police department or Sheriff Owen's forces as to their *intent* to control the mob. All persons who discussed the matter stated that they did not think the city police, whose main responsibility it was to handle the disturbances, were in any way prepared. Several said they thought the police were completely bewildered and confused. They were not trained in dealing with crowds and, as the week wore on, the extra duty began to take its toll in physical fatigue. In order to cover the situation, officers were working 20 to 30 hours on a stretch; when the Friday night disturbances took place, some police had been on continuous duty as many as 56 and 60 hours. The county sheriff's office was in the process of changing hands and some of the deputies did not even report for duty on Friday night. The matter of numbers was, of course, a great limitation. If two policemen were used to take persons arrested off to jail, it would only be a matter of two or three arrests before the whole force was away from the mob. Traffic was also a big problem since there is only one narrow main street through Clinton, and this street is on the route of U. S. Highway 25-W, a main thoroughfare from Cincinnati. The courthouse is on this street. Rerouting traffic was impossible since there were not enough police to handle it.

Acting Chief Wilson said they "started after Kasper right away," but they couldn't do much in the daytime except "keep the streets clear." At night when people crowded in the square, there were so many, they "couldn't tell who was doing anything." He felt the fact that so many women and children were involved complicated the law enforcement problem. "You can handle a man," he said, "but you can't treat women with babies in their arms the same way. You can't hurt children." Sheriff Owen indicated his office was trying to control things, but was outnumbered. "I don't know what we're going to do if the outbreaks continue," he stated to the press Wednesday, August 29. "I don't know what we're going to do unless we get some outside help. What can you do with 500 people?"

Whatever the reason, no arrests were made Monday and Tuesday, and by Wednesday it was clear that local police action would not control the situation. A group of citizens, led by Attorneys Lewallen and Davis, who had represented Anderson County in fighting the school segregation cases, sought and got an injunction from Judge Taylor restraining Kasper and others from interfering with school desegregation. When Kasper's hearings closed Friday and Judge Taylor put him in jail, Clinton felt it had its problem "under control." Then Ace Carter appeared Friday night and things went from bad to worse.

Attorneys Lewallen and Davis, supported by City Recorder Paul Horton, went about organizing and mobilizing the auxiliary police. "Maybe we didn't do the right thing," Lewallen stated, "but the police were sitting around wringing their hands and not doing anything, and the time comes when somebody has to get up and do something." Help from the state was an unknown factor at that point and a report that the Highway

Patrol who work in the Clinton area had instructions to stay away from the city indicated that Clinton might be left to handle its own problems indefinitely. Auxiliary police worked under Leo Grant in cooperation with regular, uniformed police.

Both Police Chief Wilson and Sheriff Glad Woodward say they are personally opposed to desegregation, but recognize the fact that their personal opinions no longer matter. Both claim to reject mob action as a method of opposing school desegregation. Mr. Wilson stated:

> I personally don't like mixing in the schools. I don't think anybody else does, but we are under a court order. This is the first town in Tennessee to do it in a public school and it's because of the suit we are doing it.When the biggest court in the world tells you to do something, you have to do it. It's the law and most people don't like it, but they are not going to break the law.

Mr. Woodward said:

> People don't want to do it. They don't want to mix with the colored. It's serious business. It's growed up in them not to want mixing. I feel that way, too.

Both felt the Federal injunction issued by Judge Taylor was very effective in calming people down and restoring law and order to the community, and both welcomed the state Highway Patrol and National Guard. Mr. Woodward said the people who were affected by the injunction resented it, but "he hadn't heard of a one disobeying it." Mr. Wilson stated the injunction "seemed to calm everybody down." "People are afraid of a government order," he said. "It is not like a city or a county order. They know they will get in trouble if they mess with a government order. They might go to the penitentiary for a year or two like Kasper is supposed to."

School Officials

Mr. D. J. Brittain, principal of Clinton High School, was the main school official involved in desegregation of the high school. A native of the area, Mr. Brittain and his family have long been involved in educational work in the Clinton vicinity. His father is now principal of the Oliver Springs High School, and his mother taught until her death six years ago. Mr. Brittain has been employed by the Anderson County school system for a number of years, first as a teacher at Clinton, then as principal of the Lake City school and finally as principal of Clinton High. He is a dedicated educator and is well-liked by both parents and students in the community. The fact that Kasper wanted to throw Brittain out turned many Clinton people against him.

After the January 4 order, the school board issued no further statement on school desegregation and gave no public instructions to Brittain to proceed with desegregation. Brittain went ahead with his preparations. He had a choice, he has stated of (1) resigning from his job; (2) defying the court order and suffering the consequences or (3) going ahead with desegregation. He did not want to quit his job, nor did he want to run the risk of spending the next five years in the Federal penitentiary in Atlanta. So he began desegregation. He based his stand on the law and order aspects of the issue, maintaining, "It's clear-cut. You either obey the law or you don't. You're a law-abiding citizen or you're not."

Mr. Brittain recognizes the fact that there will be academic problems in the school, due to the inadequate preparation of some of the Negro students. At the time he was interviewed, he thought Clinton's community problem was still not solved. "I am very determined," he stated, "and I will stick it out whatever happens." He believes that

Clinton was able to pull out of its crisis because the students stuck with the school. Certain student leadership groups, such as the football team, "stayed with it every day, all the way" and some students returned to school against the wishes of their parents. There have been no problems *inside* the school resulting from conflict between Negro and white students, and he does not expect any. At the height of the disturbances there were only 50 students who transferred to other schools and these soon began coming back, reducing considerably the total number of transfers. On October 1 he had a daily attendance of 650, one less student than he had October 1, 1955.

R. G. Crossno, chairman of the Anderson County Board of Education as of September, 1956, described the Board's position in this way:

> As the board saw it, we had no choice in the matter. We were given a definite order to integrate all the schools of the county as of September, 1956, and as we understood the order from the District Court there was no alternative. We had fought the case in court for six years and had done everything in a legal way we could to prevent it. There was no way to sidestep the issue. The order was clear and definite. Members of the board did not like it but it was not our decision. (Interview, September 29.)

Mr. Crossno, Mayor of Norris and owner-manager of the Norris Creamery in Norris, has been on the school board since October, 1951. He and J. M. Burkhart, Clinton hardware dealer, were the two board members active in meeting with PTA groups to prepare the parents in the fall of 1955, and he stated that on the basis of those meetings and knowledge of the county, they had not expected trouble from Clinton. They felt that trouble might come from Lake City and that part of the county in which Lake City was located when desegregation was put into effect there. "Sentiment is much stronger in that section," he said, "and we expected our trouble to come from that area." Lake City's one Negro student of high school age continued commuting to LaFollette this year and the four living in Oliver Springs continued to commute to Rockwood. Norris, which also has a high school, has no Negroes in residence, but the people there are in favor of desegregation and would accept it, according to Crossno.

Crossno stated that the school board had hoped to present the court with a permissive type of plan for desegregation and had confidence that Judge Taylor would give them the opportunity to prepare their own plan and time to implement it. When his order of January 4 came down, "The Board felt like the rug had been jerked out from under them." They had planned to do a great deal more preparation in working out their plan, Grossno said, but "the order changed all that." After the order, all the work with the PTA's was "cut off." The Board wanted time, but Mr. Crossno says they now realize "if we had asked for five or ten years and gotten it, this would not have pleased the people."

"Our problems are not solved by any means," Mr. Crossno said, "and we don't know what the solution is." Clinton is the only high school to desegregate this year, but next year Lake City will have eight Negro students eligible for high school, and the board expects some of them to apply for Lake City's "white" school. He feels the resistant elements are prepared to fight by "other means than legal means" and that there are a great many people in the county who have no basic understanding of what is involved. This is evident in the demands that they make on the school board and the statements that they make.

School Board member J. M. Burkhart of Clinton is owner of a hardware store in town and influential in community affairs in Clinton. He is on the Clinton Power Commission and the board of directors of one of the local banks and has been on the

school board since 1942. He is a native of Anderson County and a graduate of Clinton High School. Mr. Burkhart has served as chairman of the county school board.

Mr. Burkhart says he is not a philosopher, but he has done some thinking about our form of government and he has fared well under the democratic system. "This is a serious business," he remarked, referring to the school disturbances. "It is a question of whether you are going to follow the law and abide by our form of government or throw it aside for the rabble-rousers." The people of Clinton would much rather desegregation hadn't come up, but since it did, there was nothing else to do but go through with it. "It is a question," he said "of being law-abiding." He continued: "It has gotten so you can't be against integration and for the law. It has been in the Constitution a long time, but we have gotten by with it [segregation], and now we have to abide by the Constitution." He feels that Clinton is setting a precedent for other towns in Tennessee and, for that reason, it was important to see that law and order were maintained. Mr. Burkhart was the only member of the school board who joined in the petition to Judge Taylor to have a restraining order placed on Kasper and others interfering with school desegregation. "The time comes," he said, "when you have to stand up for right. If you don't believe enough in what you're doing to stick by it when the pressure is on, it's not worth much." He says he has been on the spot before and weathered it, and he is not afraid of the White Citizens Councils and their boycotts. He sees school desegregation and other civil rights issues in terms of the world-wide implications of U. S. policies. "We are dealing with colored people all over the world—not just niggers, but Indians, Chinese, Spaniards and all the rest. They think if we treat the niggers like we do here, we will treat them that way, and we want their trade." The other members of the board were not interviewed. They have not made any public statements in defiance of the court order, though the members from the area of strongest hostility to integration (New River) spoke in favor of going to Judge Taylor and talking over the possibility of halting desegregation when the suggestion came from the resistant leadership.

One school official stated that he was personally very much opposed to desegregation and does not think it will work over a long range period. He thinks a situation, such as the one depicted in the Washington school hearings, will develop and that the arrangement will work a hardship on both races. The County went ahead with desegregation because "they had no choice." "We were under court order and we did not want to go to jail," he stated. He does not feel the people of the county were ready or that "a lot of people" will ever be ready. He thinks that school desegregation and the disturbances have destroyed all the good feeling that existed between whites and Negroes in the county before desegregation. He feels as if he is sitting on a powder keg and something may happen at any time.

Opinions of Negroes

The Negroes of Clinton would appear to be, on the basis of their objective qualifications, the most unlikely participants imaginable for the type of fight which has been waged there in the school desegregation battle. First of all, they are greatly outnumbered, approximately 200 in a town of 4,000. Secondly, there is an almost complete absence of any indigenous, trained leadership. The teachers in the Negro elementary school live in Knoxville, some 17 miles away. There is no Negro physician, dentist, attorney or other professional person in the town. Thirdly, many of the Negro parents are economically dependent upon the white community for employment as maids, cooks, or on odd jobs. Several work at unskilled jobs at nearby Oak Ridge. Fourthly, few if

any of the parents have had the benefit of a high school education. Yet, in that strange way in which democracy's principles often affect people, they have a burning desire for their children to obtain more education than they have, and they have the courage of their convictions even in the face of physical harm and possible economic stress.

Mrs. Wynona McSwain is the mother of 12 children and the grandmother of six. She and her husband, Mr. Allen McSwain, live in a rambling crowded house at the top of a steep hill and in the center of a curve. They are both natives of Clinton. One could not help but be impressed with the determination of this woman as she sat in the center of a huge room near a red-hot stove and gave periodic instructions to the children as they flowed through the house in what appeared to be an unending stream of traffic. She began by deploring the tendency to look upon the Clinton situation as one which originated with the U. S. Supreme Court decision of 1954, pointing out that in the early 1940's she had begun to press the Anderson County School Board to make some provisions for the high school education of her children. Since the county had no high school for Negroes, and the segregation laws prohibited their attendance at the local high school for whites, the only provision which appeared possible at that time was some financial assistance from the County Board of Education, enabling the children to attend a Negro high school in another county. This was the beginning of a continuous fight to obtain transportation and tuition costs for the Negro children who had to leave the county to attend high school. At various times the Board paid transportation and at other times it paid tuition, but it refused to pay both. Finally, in 1949, Mrs. McSwain sought the aid of the NAACP, and a suit was instituted in the name of her daughter. Joeathrea, and five other children. The suit was based upon a request for equal facilities and not for desegregation, but even this was denied by the Federal District Court in 1952, and the suit was appealed to the U. S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati. There it remained until May 17, 1954. when it was sent back to Federal Judge Robert L. Taylor for action consistent with the May, 1954, decision. In January, 1956, he ruled that the Anderson County School Board should admit the students not later than the beginning of the fall term of 1956. Joeathrea McSwain was no longer in school but Aluah Joy McSwain, her sister, had taken her place. To Mr. and Mrs. McSwain, the economics of the situation was the chief issue. They estimated that it cost from $40 to $100 a year to send a child out of the county to school, and her job as a cook at the Anderson County Jail and her husband's job at Oak Ridge made this intolerable in the face of their large family. She says that she is in the fight to the end because it is not a short-term proposition for her family. Seven children and at least six grandchildren are still to go through high school. and they are a constant reminder of the necessity to continue the fight.

While Mr. and Mrs. McSwain demonstrate courage and perserverance, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Jarnagin furnish examples of fearlessness and the importance of planning. Helen Ann Jarnagin, their daughter, was one of the original plaintiffs who was graduated before the court case was settled. Mr. Jarnigan has assumed primary responsibility for taking measures to protect the physical security of the Negro community. He was reluctant to talk about the nature of the plans he had made, but he stated that an invasion of the Negro community would not find its residents unprepared. At church on the Sunday we were there he made a fervent appeal for funds for the "protective force." and received a very good response in the way of contributions. Mrs. Jarnagin related that her son who is in the armed services in Japan had received the news of the Clinton mob action there and had written to her and to the Anderson County Red Cross to

ascertain if his parents were unharmed. The white Red Cross representative came out to talk with Mrs. Jarnagin after receiving the letter. He was disinclined to state the reason for the letter, saying that the Jarnagin's son had expressed concern over not hearing from his parents and wondered if they were ill. Finally, the Red Cross representative stated that it was the Clinton mob action which had been widely reported in Japan that caused the son to write the Red Cross. The Red Cross representative was quite impressed, apparently, with the speed with which Clinton's troubles had been communicated overseas.

Jo Ann Allen, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Allen, is a very attractive and alert girl of 14 who has been used by the Clinton school as a symbol of the positive Negro potential. She speaks well, is poised, and dresses appropriately for her age. Her mother is a household servant, and her father works at Oak Ridge in the cafeteria. Both are highly intelligent and concerned for the welfare of their three children, of whom Jo Ann is the eldest. Jo Ann has been elected vice-president of her home room, and has gone to Washington with one of the white girl students of Clinton to participate in a television panel. Her parents were concerned at the time of our visit that her activities might give her a false sense of her own importance and might make her a target for the rabid segregationists. Jo Ann reported that once they were inside the school, life proceeded rather normally. The teachers were fair and pleasant, and the students have either been friendly or indifferent. The lessons were not more difficult that at Austin High School (Negro) in Knoxville. The only difficulty they were having was in mathematics which all the students attributed to the weak background acquired in the Clinton elementary school. Mrs. Allen reported that there were two things which she felt badly about. One was the fact that the newspaper pictures showed one of the active mob participants to be a young white boy who is no longer in school, but who lived near them and had been a close playmate of the Allen children. The Allen children have reacted with an almost complete loss of faith in the possibility of sincere friendship across racial lines. The other incident was the participation in the mob action of a white woman who lives across the street from the Allens and to whom the Allens had been very helpful as neighbors. Mrs. Allen stated that she could not resist the temptation to speak to the white neighbor about it, and when she did, the white neighbor began to cry and said, "You and your people have been nicer to me than my own relatives, but I just don't believe in mixing of the races in school."

"Bobby Cain is our hero. He leads us up the school steps and into the school, and he waits in the afternoon until the last one of us is ready to leave." This was the general comment made about this sixteen year old boy by the other Negro students attending Clinton High School. The poignant aspect of this is that Bobby himself did not want to go to Clinton High School. Bobby was in his senior year at Austin High in Knoxville, and he wanted to graduate with his class. He told us, "I especially didn't want any trouble." So when "trouble" threatened at Clinton High, Bobby could not see the logic of leaving Austin High which he liked in order to go to Clinton High (which he did not like at first) and having "trouble" in the process. But Mrs. Cain is determined that her children shall have an education, and she has three children younger than Bobby. She made it a matter of "family" loyalty and responsibility. "Now see here, Bobby," she told him. "Sure, you've got just one year at Austin and you could go back and finish. That would be fine for you. But what about your brother and sisters (Leonard, Hattie and Diane)? We can't afford to send you back to Austin, but you could work to make it yourself. But where would that leave your sisters and Leonard

when they are ready to start high school? Boy, this is our big chance and if we don't make it now we may never make it." Bobby saw the point and when the Negro students had to run the gauntlet of adults and students to mount the steps to Clinton Hall ("the longest journey in our lives" the Negro students called the trip from the bottom of the steps to the top), it was Bobby Cain who was the leader. It was Bobby Cain who "voluntarily" stayed after school if one of the other Negro students was detained for any reason. He was the first each day to encounter the racial epithets from the white segregationists: "coon," "nigger," "black ape," but Bobby said, "I could take the names. That didn't hurt me." But on Thursday of the first week of school, as Bobby was walking to buy his lunch at a drive-in stand, a crowd of 200 people started to push him around from one side to the other. Bobby says he kept walking while the police occupied the role of spectators. Finally, the pushing became so violent that he said, "I made up my mind that this was it. They were going to mob me anyway, so I might as well try to protect myself." He drew out a little pocketknife of the kind boys often carry. The police arrested him, "protective custody" it was called, and Mrs. McSwain who is the cook at the jail contacted an older brother who came for him. Somehow that incident crystallized his determination instead of intimidating him, and when we talked with him he was a shy, calm boy. He said, "I have got to settle down to do this homework. This trigonometry is awfully rough." Bobby's story was written up in *Collier's* magazine. November 13, 1956, under the title of "The Ordeal of Bobby Cain."

The Negroes of Clinton are strongly in favor of desegregation. The Reverend Orville Willis. a Negro Baptist minister, tried to get some of the parents to withdraw their children after trouble developed, but they held firm. He stated that his pleas were not based upon any support for segregation but upon his concern for the physical safety of the children. Some of the parents did give evidence of wavering at times, but the stronger parents buoyed them up, and some parents reported that some of the white citizens encouraged them to continue to send their children to school because they did not want Clinton to have the reputation of having surrendered to the mob. The parents especially praised the efforts of Leo Grant, an Oak Ridge attorney, who organized the auxiliary police. W. Buford Lewallen, the Mayor's son, and school Principal J. D. Brittain, Jr. Many expressed the feeling that Principal Brittain had undergone a worse ordeal than the Negro parents and that he had demonstrated both courage and the conviction of his belief in law and order.

There had been very little evidence of retaliation against those Negroes involved in the desegregation process. Some Negro domestics were reported to have quit their job after hearing remarks made by their employers which they did not like.

The Negro parents almost without exception reported that race relations were good in Clinton before the violence. Everyone mentioned the exchange of church choirs which had been practiced, and it was mentioned that on some occasions when the Negro churches had sponsored dinners or suppers to raise funds, white persons frequently came to partake of the meals. There was the feeling that the trouble did not stem from the white people of Clinton but from outside agitators and from persons who lived outside of the town in the rural sections of the county. The Negroes would not hazard a guess as to the status of race relations after the violence, but many said that it would be difficult for them to have the trust and confidence in the friendship of white persons which they had had before the violence.

One of the most interesting observations to come out of the interviews with the

Negro parents was the long range view which many took with respect to the desegregation of the schools. They were generally looking beyond the mere education of those of their children who were currently involved in the desegregation process to what this would mean to the brothers and sisters of these children who were yet to reach high school. This perspective was probably one of the important factors which gave strength to their determination to press for desegregation at this time regardless of the consequences.

Lessons from Clinton's Experience

Preparation should take in the functional community or the total area affected by desegregation. Clinton's school population is 50% town, with 50% of the students coming in from the outlying sections around Clinton. Preparation was town-focused. More important, perhaps, the desegregation order applied to the whole county and people all over the county came in to listen to Kasper and do something to stop it, including the disgruntled Oak Ridge people who had been unsuccessful in preventing desegregation in their own schools the year before.

Community preparation should in some way reach groups at all economic and social levels. The lower income group was left out in the type of preparation that Clinton planned, working through PTA's and civic luncheon groups. The local labor union was not utilized, nor were the churches, to any extent.

Preparation of students and faculty seems very important in Clinton's situation. Students were given a sense of responsibility in the matter and were trained for and given the opportunity to exercise leadership. While some swelled Kasper's crowds on the square and some participated in the car-rocking, etc., they maintained decorum in the school building and continued going to school. A strong effort should be made to prevent them from adding their presence to the crowds.

Inconsistencies in the total desegregation picture tend to confuse people and make the process more difficult. Clinton, for example, continues to operate segregated grade schools and people cannot understand why part of the school system can continue to remain segregated and part must be desegregated. This applies on a wider base, too. At the time Clinton was desegregating and leaders were saying, "We must, the Courts order us to," Mansfield, Texas, also under court order, was seemingly getting by with defying the court order.

Partial desegregation is a hard way to do it. Next year, Lake City, which received Clinton's recalcitrant students, will probably be under pressure to desegregate their high school. This year, Clinton had migrants from Oak Ridge, which desegregated last year. The piecemeal approach not only drags out the process, but sets up one school at a time as a target for the agitators.

As long as Southern communities are in the "test tube" stage of desegregation, Kaspers and Carters will probably come in. This fact should be recognized and some preparation made on the part of state officials to supplement and support local law enforcement agencies. Small towns in particular are not equipped to deal with the professional agitator and the crowds that flock to him, and the state should feel some obligation to assist.

Local preparation should include the law enforcement agencies as well as civic clubs and parents. This should be done so that they will be aware of existing laws that can be used to curb disturbances and will be psychologically prepared to take firm steps in enforcing the law.

Citizens should not expect the police and public officials to deal with the problem alone. Public officials and police need support and reassurance from their community, and in many cases, pressure. Citizens in Clinton, the top leadership, particularly, took action and cooperated in trying to handle a difficult law enforcement problem that probably could have been nipped in the bud with more efficient police action at the outset.

There is a need for someone or some group to say "Desegregation is right," as well as, "It is the law." Apparently no one in Clinton said desegregation was morally right, as well as the legal thing to do, and there were people there in need of reassurance on that level. The opposition, on the other hand, was dealing with desegregation as a moral and social issue, telling people they had no obligation to obey a law which violated their sense of right and tried to break down prevailing customs.

Many white people are still living in a "separate but equal" dream world that makes it very difficult or impossible for them to accept desegregation as the "solution" to the South's educational and social

problems. Somehow or other white leadership, particularly, must be brought around to accepting the fact that "separate but equal" is no longer a legally acceptable pattern in the field of public education.

Negroes at the local level have a responsibility for putting across their desire for and basic right to desegregated facilities. Negroes in Clinton have, by both their actions and public statements to the press, demonstrated their preference for and determination to attain desegregated education. Despite this, many whites, including those in leadership positions, still cling to the idea that it is not the local Negroes, but "outside" forces that have sought the change.

Strong law enforcement action is needed to convince some people that Federal court orders are enforceable and have "teeth" in them. Resistance forces have sold the idea that the Supreme Court has no power to enforce its decisions and therefore cannot "make" the people of the South do something that is not in accordance with their customs. Punishment of violators throws a new light on the situation and people who thought there was no penalty for defiance find that they do indeed have to pay.

People are very slow to grasp the meaning of drastic social change and this "lag" tends to slow down their activities in organizing resistance. In Clinton, for example, many people who were opposed to desegregation did nothing about it because they did not really believe it would happen. Had not someone come in to "help" them, they probably would not have gotten around to trying to do something before desegregation was already succeeding.

The Clinton situation suggests that people who accept the idea of desegregation are concerned about problems confined to the immediate situation, while those who do not accept the idea are concerned about problems of a larger scope outside the immediate situation. The principal and faculty in Clinton, for example, seem to be concerned with academic shortcomings of the newcomers and techniques for putting students at ease in a new situation. The opposition, on the other hand, is bothered by the "problem" of preventing mongrelization of the races, "Communists" on the Supreme Court bench, national trends toward degeneration and corruption, and the protection of "states' rights."

Favorable or unfavorable attitudes toward desegregation do not seem to be the most important factor in the situation when people are faced with desegregation by court order. Many other attitudes and values are involved—regard for law and order, respect for local leaders, loyalty to individuals, and desire for public services. Their attitude toward desegregation does not operate in a vacuum, but finds its place in a hierarchy of other attitudes and values.